



ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

24 Duff Street,
ARNCLIFFE. 2205.
October 1975.

Dear Friend and Member,

The regular meeting will be held as follows:

Date: Friday Evening, October 17th, 1975, at 8 p.m.

Place: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale.

Business: General.

Syllabus Item: Mr. Vaughan Evans will give an Illustrated address entitled:

"A Huff, a Puff, and a Flash in the Pan". This will be a

"Mystery Talk" which you will surely enjoy.

Supper Roster: Mrs. Day, Captain, Mesdames O'Shea, Longhurst, Gash,
Samuelson.

Ladies please bring a plate.

Mr. D. Sinclair,

President.

Phone 587.4555.

Mrs. E. Wright,

Treas. & Soc. Sec.

Phone 599.4884.

Mrs. E. Eardley,

Secretary.

Phone 59.8078.

Mr. A. Ellis,

Research Officer.

Phone 587.1159.

"History with its flickering lamp stumbles along the trail of the past, trying to reconstruct its scenes, to revive its echoes, and kindle with pale gleam the passion of former days."

Winston Churchill. (1940)

Social.

An Orchestra of some 15 - 20 Musicians and a Vocalist are giving a Concert of Chamber Music in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale, on:

Sunday afternoon, October 26th, 1975, at 2.30 p.m.

Tickets are \$1.50 each.

Tea & Biscuits will be served at interval.

Seating accommodation is limited to 100 people.

Book early to save disappointment. The proceeds of this Concert will go towards the "Restoration of Lydham Hall". You can be assured of a good afternoon's entertainment.

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A limited supply of the following books, written and illustrated by the late Gifford Eardley (re-printed by popular request) are now available, cost \$1.00 each, postage extra.

Book 1. "The Early History of The Wolli Creek Valley"

Book 2. "The Kogarah to Sans Souci Tramway"

Book 3. "Thomas Saywell's Tramway, 1887- 1914. Rockdale to Lady Robinsons Beach"

Book 4. "The Arncliffe to Bexley Steam Tramway"

Also available are: (By the same Author)

Book 5. "Heritage in Stone" (Limited Stocks)

Book 6. "All Stations to Como" (Limited Stocks)

Book 7. "The Early History. Tempe & The Black Creek Valley"

Contact Secretary 'Phone 59.8078.

OR Miss Otten 'Phone 59.4259.

ALSO Smith's Florist Shop, Tramway Arcade, Rockdale.

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Our Members will be sorry to know that one of our older Members, Mrs. May Hook, suffered a stroke in May of this year, and has been in a Convalescent Home in Ryde ever since. We all wish her well, and regret that we did not know sooner.

Mrs. McNamara has also been in hospital. We sincerely trust that she will soon be well.

It is sad to have to record the passing of two of our Members since our August Meeting. Mrs. A. Matheson of Dunmore Street, Bexley, and Mr. Allan Geeves, of Forest Road, Bexley, both of whom have been with the Society for a long time. We offer our condolences to their families.

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Miss Otten, Curator of "Lydham Hall", is in need of Ladies and/or Gentlemen to assist with the weekend roster. Visitors come from far and wide to see this lovely old Home, and your presence would greatly facilitate inspections. Ring Miss Otten, Phone 59.4259. Your call will be appreciated.

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We would like to say "Thank you" to all who have either Donated or Loaned their precious "Bits and Pieces" to make Lydham Hall so interesting and attractive.

Misses Stacey, Bexley.	1 Baby's Binder 1 Crochet Macrame Bag. 1 National Emergency Service Book. 1 Book. Record of War-work 1939-1945. 24 Books Volunteer Air Observers Corps. 2nd World War. 1 School Slate. 1 Brass Fireplace Shovel.
Mr. Colin Semmler, Bexley.	3 White Linen Table Mats.
Rev. W.L. Walsh, Carlton.	Picnic Hamper Case.
Mrs. W. Foster, Carlton.	Brooch Cushion. Bead embroidered - 100 yrs. 1 jelly mould. 1 small dish, Shelley china 1 match box cover. 1 stud box. 1 pink satin tea cosy. 1 lace table centre.
Mrs. D. Crofts, Arncliffe.	Glass Perfume Bottle Pair Beaded Baby Frock Pieces 1 Story Book 1887.
Mrs. E. Knappett, Carlton.	Willow Pattern Tea Pot.
Mrs. I. Wilson, Carlton.	Blue and Gold Meakin China Jug.
Mrs. B. Austin, Arncliffe.	Assortment of 10 Kitchen Articles - Glass, china and stoneware.
Mr. & Mrs. E. Upton, Oatley.	On Loan: Historic Patchwork Silk Quilt over 9000 pieces in it. Handmade.
Mrs. H. Brenneke, Alfred St., Ramsgate.	Medal Lieut. J.C. Ross, MLA., Kogarah, 1932-1941; and Alderman Rockdale Council 1937-1943. Medal presented to Elma C. Sullivan, Peace Sports 1919.

Mrs. F.C. Smith,
Bay St.,
Rockdale.

Collection of Doyleys. Hand-made 40 yrs. old.
Tea Caddy. 60-70 years old.

Queen Victoria Club.

Donated to Lydham Hall, Plaster Bust Queen
Victoria 1897. Brocade Portrait of Queen
Victoria 1897.

POST OFFICES IN KINGSGROVE.

- B. J. Madden.

In 1804, the name "King's Grove" was given to a grant of land to Hannah Laycock. It was a rectangular block of 500 acres, and was bounded by Kingsgrove Road, William Street, Bexley Road and a continued line to Preddy's Road and Stoney Creek Road, and a continued line back to Preddy's Road, south of Canonbury Grove. The name gradually became the one word "Kingsgrove".

The first Kingsgrove Post Office was established on 1st February, 1870. It followed the opening of Post Offices at Canterbury in 1858, Kogarah in 1863 and Gannon's Forest (Hurstville) in 1864. It preceded Post Offices opened at Arncliffe in 1878, Belmore (then in Canterbury Road, Wiley Park) in 1879 and Rockdale and Bexley in 1882.

The first postmistress was Mrs. Peninah Mary Favell, a surname well-known in the St. George district. Her sureties were Walter Favell, husband; George Charles Thompson, writing clerk; and Thomas Miller, freeholder; all of Kingsgrove. Her salary was 12.0.0 pounds p.a.

The location of the Post Office is not known. The notice in the Government Gazette on the establishment of the Post Office refers to it as at Kingsgrove, near Canterbury. This suggests the northern side of the present suburb, rather than the southern. Possibly it was near the corner of the present Bexley Road and Homer Street, as around this time the Thompsons owned "Bexley" which was north-east of that corner. Also, one Miller had land in Homer Street, near Bexley Road.

George Charles Thompson became postmaster on 21st April, 1870, and the office was closed on 1st September, 1870.

Kingsgrove Post Office was re-established on 15th June, 1883, in charge of David Lewis, who was paid 10.0.0 pounds p.a. His sureties were James McBean, grocer; and Edwin Tyrell Sayers, clerk; both of Canterbury. Sand's Directories from 1884 to 1887 list either Kingsgrove Post Office, or David Lewis, carrier and postmaster, or Mrs. Elizabeth Lewis, postmistress, as being in the present Bexley Road (then known as Northcote Street or Bexley Street) near Homer Street. Also, Lewis had a block of land at the corner of Bexley Road and Homer Street.

In September, 1884, Lewis named new sureties: Morgan Davies,

Lime Merchant of Petersham; and Stephen Clifton, Contractor, of Ashfield.

Charles Astley Smith became postmaster on 23rd September, 1885, although Sand's Directories still listed David Lewis (or Louis) as carrier and postmaster as late as 1887. In 1887 and 1888, but not in 1886, Sand's Directories list Charles A Smith, Store-keeper in Homer Street, south side between Sharpe Street (now Kingsgrove Road) and Old Illawarra Road (possibly where Flatrock Road met Northcote Street near the present intersection of Homer Street and Bexley Road.) This Post Office closed on 20th June, 1887.

In 1919, Kingsgrove Post Office re-opened at an entirely different location. It was in Stoney Creek Road, on the Croydon Road side of the Kingsgrove Baptist Church. It is at times stated as being opposite the Public School. The address is usually given as 213 Stoney Creek Road. 175 Stoney Creek Road is sometimes mentioned, but this appears to be a re-numbering of the same location.

The railway line from Tempe to Kingsgrove was opened on 21st September, 1931 and the extension to East Hills on 21st December, 1931. However, development near Kingsgrove Railway Station was slow for some years. In June, 1936, when there was a request for a new non-official Post Office near the station, the Postal Inspector said that there was only one store in Croydon Road (now Kingsgrove Road), near the station, and the district was very sparsely settled. There was a daily letter delivery and a telegram delivery from Hurstville, and letters could be posted at a letter box at the corner of Croydon Road and Morgan Street.

By 1940, when further representations for an office were made, steady development had occurred. The inspector said that there were 17 shops, 3 in course of construction and others about to be commenced. He continued: "There are approximately 520 residences within 1/2 mile of the Kingsgrove railway station. The majority of these houses are of a good type and have been erected within the past three years. Building expansion is still taking place within this area, and is expected to continue for some little time." At this time, letters for the district were being delivered from Hurstville, Bexley, Earlwood and Belmore.

The P.M.G. Department agreed to open the new office, and arranged a meeting of residents to determine the most suitable names for the new and old offices. It was agreed that the new Post Office should be called "Kingsgrove" and the office in Stoney Creek Road be called "Benhill". It would be interesting to know why this name was selected. Two years later, its name was changed to "Bexley West". It closed on 31st October, 1968.

Reverting to the new Kingsgrove Post Office in Croydon Road (now Kingsgrove Road): Mrs R m Glover, who conducted a mixed business at 301 Croydon Road, proposed to conduct the Post Office at the adjacent premises, No.299, which were then occupied by Mr M H Todd, an Estate Agent. However, as a married woman, she was ineligible for the appointment.

Eventually, Mr H H Todd was appointed Postmaster, and the Kingsgrove Post Office was established on 5th August, 1940. It was located in premises at the corner of Croydon Road and Mashman Avenue, near the Railway Station.

Money Order facilities were provided from 1st October, 1940 to coincide with the transfer to the Post Office of the Commonwealth Savings Bank Agency, formerly conducted by Mr J J Brocklehurst, an Estate Agent.

As the district developed, postal business increased considerably and by April, 1943, approval was given for the employment of a full-time assistant.

Up to 3rd. July, 1944, when a local delivery was commenced, telegrams for the district were delivered from the adjoining official Post Offices at Belmore, Bexley, Campsie, Earlwood and Hurstville.

Mrs Mary C Fleming, was temporarily appointed Postmistress on 1st July, 1947, pending arrangements to raise the status of the office to that of official Post Office. Because of the exceptional rate of post-war building, Kingsgrove had become a large and important suburb.

The transfer to official conditions was delayed by the difficulty in erecting a building because of the shortage of building materials. Temporary accommodation was provided by the erection of a former army hut. Approval was given for the introduction of official conditions at Kingsgrove on 15th January, 1951, and arrangements were made for Mr L E Johnson to take charge of the office. Mr Johnson's staff comprised a Postal Clerk, Indoor Postal Officer, four Postal Officers (Delivery) and a Junior Postal Officer.

A new and modern Post Office building was officially opened on 30th August, 1971. This was a little over 100 years after the establishment of the first Post Office in Kingsgrove.

*(Much of this information is from material kindly supplied by
- The Historical Office, Australian Post Office).*

- May 1975.

JUDD FAMILY - ARNCLIFFE.

- *Harold N Riley.*

Mr William Judd, who resided at Cook's River Road, St. Peters, near the site of the old Town Hall, on the right hand side of the road leading to Sydney, conducted a grocery business and also an egg and butter run, all deliveries being carried out per medium of a horse and cart.

He became interested in and rented a small cottage which once occupied the site of the present Arncliffe Railway Station, (the old brick wellhead which was on the property has recently been demolished and the well filled in). When the railway came through the cottage was put up for auction as it stood in the path of the line, and it became necessary to either remove it (as was done in those days) or demolish it. Mr Judd purchased the cottage, (which was originally owned by Mr Charles Fripp) and it was removed piece by piece to a vacant property lying between Dowling and Cook Street (now Fripp Street) where it was re-erected in what is today known as Hirst Street or Hirst Lane, being used as a week-end cottage, more or less.

The small weatherboard cottage is still occupied, although its outer walls have been covered with fibro, and small additions have been added to its surround.

The large block of ground, bounded on the east by Wollongong Road and on the west by Little Hirst Lane, on the south by Cook Street (now Fripp Street) and on the north by Dowling Street, was covered with gum trees, Banksia trees and Tea Tree scrub, the whole area being inhabited by large Goannas. The northern section of the property was cleared and a citrus and peach and apricot orchard planted, a grove of Pinus Insignus trees lining the boundary of Little Wazir Street, as a wind break. Other exotic trees were planted, many of which are still in splendid condition, even though the land is under the control of the Department of Education. It is understood that this body was prepared to cut the trees down, but a memorandum was presented to the authorities concerned for the preservation of the trees, and this has been faithfully observed. The few stumps noted in the present Athelstane School grounds were trees which had died prior to the advent of the school.

The western section of more arable land was farmed by a Chinese gardiner by the name of Mr Po Kee, who lived in a small slab cottage facing towards Little Wazir Street and on the northern side of the previously mentioned cottage. This Celestial gentleman, (who was well known by the local lads for his fruit) hawked his fruit and vegetables by means of a shoulder yoke with a basket dangling from either end, and moving at a trot, sold his goods to the local populace. The garden was later cultivated by Europeans.

At a later date "Athelstane", a fine two-storied residence built of brick, cement rendered and painted "off stone colour", commonly known as "Drab" was erected. Downstairs, ranging along the south side off the hall, was a long "combination room", at the back was the kitchen, approximately 12' x 12' in size, and a sloping verandah which made up the width of the house. The laundry or wash house, rather primitive in its construction, was an outshut leaning against the kitchen wall on the western side. Upstairs there were two bedrooms on the main part of the building, and above the kitchen extension was a small bathroom, lobby, and two small bedrooms for the boys of the family. The two main bedrooms opened by means of two "French" doors on to the balcony.

On either side of the house was a very fine specimen of American Magnolia, said to be the largest in the State. These trees have also been retained.

The verandahs were noted for their fine cast iron lace and the beauty of the cast iron supporting pillars. The verandahs returned around for a distance of about 6' on the northern side of the house.

Mr Judd became interested in local land speculation and was also responsible for the establishment of "Judd's Hurstville Brickworks" on the eastern side of the Illawarra Railway at Mortdale. The works were formed into a company as a family concern and eventually came into the possession of the second son, Percy Judd, and later into the hands of Bruce Judd who died at Grafton about 1968.

It is understood that Mr William Judd's wife, who always signed herself as "Mrs E E Judd", had remarkable business instincts, and although she rarely left the precincts of "Athelstane", was instrumental in amassing the family fortunes, so astute was she dealing with property sales.

The subdivision of the southern portion of the property took place about 1924, when two diagonal streets, named Horsell Avenue and Athelstane Avenue, came into being. The remainder of the property was taken over by the Department of Education about 1950. The old house remained intact until about 1955, being used as a residence by Mr Percy Judd, until the noise of the school children disturbed his nerves.

When the premises were vacated, the house was used as class rooms for a year or so, and then demolished to make way for portable type class rooms.

Athelstane School caters for both boys and girls, ranging from kindergarten to sixth grade, after which the children are graded into High Schools. There are many class rooms today, none of which are of outstanding architectural merit.

In conclusion, it should be mentioned that the "first" class room at Athelstane school was removed, on wheels, from the grounds of what was then "The Salvation Army Girls' Home", "The Nest" and formerly "Dappetto". At that time school was held at the rear of the "The Nest", the school being known as Wilson Road School.

It is pleasing to know that the name "Athelstane" is still applied to the present day school.

The Society would be most interested in obtaining facts concerning the early families of the district.

How far back can your family tree be traced?

Would you be interested in submitting what you are able to record to the Society, for use in future Bulletins?
